



Historical 8

A MANUAL

OF 8

INFORMATION AND DIRECTION

FOR THE USE OF THE

Ref. Protestant Dutch Church

OF

SCHRAALENBERGH.

COMPILED BY

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1861.

At a meeting of the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church of Schraalenbergh, on November 24, 1860, it was

“*Resolved*, That the Pastor be requested to draw up the *Manual*, called for by a vote of the Congregation at its recent meeting.”

SUCCINCT HISTORY.

THE Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Schraalenbergh was organized A.D. 1724. Their first building was erected A.D. 1725, a few rods east of the present site of the "South Church." Their first pastor was Rev. Reinhart Erickson, who was settled the same year, over the Schraalenbergh, Hackensack, and Paramus congregations. He continued in this connection three years, and then removed to Schenectady. Two years after his removal, Schraalenbergh and Paramus congregations united in a call upon Rev. Geo. W. Mancius, who accepted, and was settled on December 23, 1730. Over these churches he continued to preside for one year, more or less. About five years after his removal, the church of Schraalenbergh sought and obtained ecclesiastical connection with the church of Hackensack, then served by Rev. Antonius Curtenius, a worthy Holland minister, who assumed this united charge A.D. 1737, and remained sole pastor for the period of some ten years. It was then thought best, for reasons not now discoverable, to obtain the services of a colleague; and accordingly Rev. John H. Goetschius was chosen, and settled as co-pastor Oct. 16th, 1748.

For a little time these brethren dwelt together in unity; then, for some cause, not a creditable one, dissensions arose. Mr. Goetschius was young, active, ardent, and possessed withal of popular talents. Mr. Curtenius was a quiet, good man, who loved peace no less than piety; but he was less active, and second to his colleague in popularity. Facts lead us to infer that Goetschius played the part of Absalom, in stealing the hearts of the people from Curtenius. He so managed as to procure the members of Consistory from among his own immediate friends who had become alienated from the older pastor; and the record is left, by one who had made a careful collection of well-ascertained facts, that "Curtenius preached frequently without a single elder or deacon in his seat."

This was a lamentable state of things, doubtlessly brought about by the culpable conduct of Goetschius; for the following significant fact seems to fix the blame upon him. Dr. Taylor says: "In a manuscript in my possession it appears that 'Mr. Goetschius and his friends went to Amboy, and obtained from the governor a charter covering the church property in an improper manner, without the knowledge of the friends of Mr. Curtenius. Subsequently, on representation from that party to the governor, the charter was declared invalid.'" So far as recorded facts prove, this was the beginning of the troubles that have afflicted the Church in this region down to a comparatively recent date. Whatever may have been the fluctuation of affairs previously, it is quite apparent that this proceeding of Goetschius and his friends was cause amply sufficient for the formation of two parties in these congregations, distinctly marked,

and widely alienated from each other. But there was another matter that served to give greater distinctness and precision of form to both of them. There was a question of general interest at this time, warmly agitated throughout the Church, in reference to the right of ordination. Two parties sprang up at length, who took to themselves the names of *Coetus* and *Conferentie*. The former contended for an independent ecclesiastical organization in this country, and the latter resisted it; warmly insisting upon a continued dependence upon the Classis of Amsterdam in Holland, by whose authority the ministry of the Church in this country, should be ordained. This controversy waxed warm, far beyond reasonable limits; and it served as an additional element of strife between the contending factions in these congregations. "Thus we ascertain," says Dr. Taylor, in his "Annals," etc., "that Curtenius, with the Conferentie party, and Goetschius, with the Coetus, the terrible rent was made in Hackensack and Schraalenbergh just about the time of Curtenius being called to Flatbush." The fierce conflict and personal indignities that followed form a record of disgrace which we refuse to copy.

Mr. Curtenius left this charge, May, 1755, having labored for twenty-five years, with success and acceptance, until the unfortunate advent of a colleague. After his departure, Mr. Goetschius had the ground all to himself, and sought to keep it. His effort to do so, together with his agency in obtaining the aforesaid illegal charter, very naturally rendered him odious to the friends of his former colleague; and we are not therefore surprised to find the latter utterly dissatisfied with his services. They sought and obtained a distinct organization,

and called the Rev. John Schuyler to succeed Mr. Curtinius. Thus there came to be, in A.D. 1756, *two* congregations at Schraalenbergh, and *two* at Hackensack, worshipping on alternate Sabbaths in the same buildings, each acknowledging the right of the other to one half of the property at each location. Conjoint possession by hostile owners, was a novelty not likely to foster brotherly love; nevertheless this complicate arrangement continued undisturbed for a long period, Messrs. Goetschius and Schuyler being cotemporaneous in these distinct charges. At length Mr. Schuyler's labors ended A.D. 1759. After a vacancy of eight years, his people chose, as his successor, Rev. Cornelius Blauw, a native of Holland, who was settled A.D. 1768. He remained but three years, and was succeeded by Rev. Warmoldus Kuypers, who was cotemporaneous with Mr. Goetschius until the death of the latter, Nov. 14th, 1774. The following year Rev. Dirck Romeyn succeeded Mr. Goetschius, and continued as pastor for ten years.

During the co-pastorate of Kuypers and Romeyn the Revolutionary War was begun, and this brought an increase of embittered feelings between these congregations. Rev. James Romeyn, as quoted by Dr. Taylor in his "Annals," says, in relation to the consequent state of affairs: "Some few were traitorous, some indifferent; others entered not as warmly into the cause as might have been expected; others, again, with enlightened patriotism, urged on the cause of their country as the cause of God. A few, no doubt, were excessive in professions of patriotism, and used it to cloak their love of plunder and their individual resentments, Then came the strong political controversies, under the early years

of our Constitution. All these causes constantly agitated the community composing these congregations." "They followed their respective ministers on alternate Sabbaths, meeting like two angry waves. Private friendships, with many, were broken up. Politics were largely intermingled in the discussions of the pulpit, and the result was, for a long time, that all, or nearly all who belonged to one communion were of one political creed, and all, or nearly all who were of the other communion were on the opposite side in politics."

Dr. Romeyn left A.D. 1784, and Rev. Solomon Froeleigh was called A.D. 1786. Efforts by the Classis and the Synod were made to bring these difficulties to an end—difficulties as absurd in their existence as they were mischievous in their continuance. These efforts were successful for a time. The consistories of Mr. Froeleigh were willing to listen to, and obey the entreaties and injunctions of the Synod; but those of Mr. Kuypers refused, unless "the well-known charter" was repealed. Narrowed down to this one point, the dispute seemed to be in a fair way for complete suppression. The Committee of Synod, having the business in hand, was continued, and their further efforts were apparently successful. As Mr. Kuypers' people, who had been obstinately persistent on this point, finally came into the proposed arrangement, it is probable that the aforesaid charter, improperly obtained by the agency of Goetschius and others, was now ignored as invalid and inoperative; having been so declared by the governor, as before related; for a legal incorporation was obtained in 1789. The Classis recorded their great joy over this event, and disputes of forty

years of age, as disgraceful as they were old, it was thought would now be entombed in oblivion forever.

Messrs. Kuypers and Froeleigh thence continued alternately to officiate at Hackensack and Schraalenbergh, as their predecessors had done, until the former was disabled by advancing age and growing infirmities.

But the fire, which was thought to have been extinguished, had only been subdued, and, after having smouldered for five years, broke out afresh, and more violent than ever. The temporal concerns of the churches were now administered under a special charter by a common corporation, acting for the equal benefit of the two bracketed congregations. In the eye of the law, they were thus *one* body; but ecclesiastically they were *two* congregations served by separate ministers. This unhappy arrangement seems to have been favorable for complicating difficulties, and the advantage it afforded for that end was not neglected.

It became necessary at this time to furnish a new parsonage for Mr. Kuypers; accordingly, in 1795, a resolution was passed to take out of the common fund the sum of £50, to pay Mr. Froeleigh for arrearages of salary; and the further sum of £200 for building the new parsonage. Mr. Froeleigh received the former, but strenuously opposed the appropriation of the latter sum. He called his congregations together for consultation, and shortly after circulated a paper for subscriptions to a request for a dissolution of the union. This was presented to the Classis of Hackensack on August 11th, 1795. The friends of peace were aggrieved at this step, in which Froeleigh alone was prominent. The Classis refused their own agency in separating the churches of Mr.

Froeleigh from those of Mr. Kuypers, and referred the subject to Particular Synod. The same year Synod appointed a committee to reconcile matters, if possible, or to dissolve the connection, in conformity with the request of Froeleigh and his churches. The committee met, and labored with the petitioners for disunion, having in their hands, as a strong argument, the unanimous petition of Kuypers' people for a peaceable continuance under the arrangements that had been made. The result was, a further continuance of the union, and also the appropriation of £200 for the new parsonage.

Mr. Kuypers' infirmities had now so much increased, that he was unable to perform his accustomed service. His people were thus placed at much disadvantage in this unseemly contest. But in order to smother all uprisings of the old difficulties, the Synod appointed another committee, in 1797, to confer with the aforesaid parties. This committee drew up the following paper, and both parties agreed to abide by its provisions:

“ 1st. Animosities shall cease. 2d. All distinctions to be done away, as to the choice of members of the Consistories; they to be chosen without limitation, provided the member going out of office shall nominate two persons, one of whom shall be chosen. 3d. A second minister to be called, but not without the unanimous consent of Mr. Kuypers' part of the Consistory; that, if double the sum of Mr. Froeleigh's salary be raised, the calls shall be equal; if not, Mr. Kuypers' people shall provide for his support. The same provision is made in case of Mr. Froeleigh's death or removal. 4th. A parsonage-house to be built by both congregations equally. If

Mr. Froeleigh's people refuse, then the whole expense to be paid out of the fund."

Such were the equitable and conciliatory measures to which both parties agreed. But not long after, Mr. Froeleigh withdrew the assent he had solemnly given, and this being done before the committee had time to embody the agreement in a report to Synod, he claimed that he and his party were not bound by it. Thus matters were thrown back where they were. He was now determined on separation, the other party opposing. Having no new facts to justify his efforts, he had recourse to *dreams* and *impressions*, an account of which, comically grave, is given in a published "Lamentation," by an admiring friend, assuring us that thus the Lord had intimated his will to his servant, Solomon Froeleigh. Therefore, as "he marked the distinction between the precious and the vile," separation must take place. It should here be distinctly understood, that in the use of this phraseology, himself and party were adjudged the *precious*, while the other party and their minister were the *vile*. By the evidence of the subsequent history, however, it appears God did not think so.

During this fresh agitation, at his own request, the Rev. Mr. Kuypers was declared by the Classis *emeritus*, that is, disabled, on September 5th, 1797; and he retired from the duties of the ministry. His warmly-attached congregations obligated themselves to pay him £60 per annum, for the remainder of his life; but they were not called upon for this generous provision. The honored pastor departed this life, only five days after his release from ministerial labor, September 10th, 1797.

Particular Synod met in May, 1799. The aforesaid committee reported the agreement made by both parties, and also Mr. Froeleigh's subsequent withdrawal. As their action was thus frustrated, Synod immediately granted the Kuypers' congregations supplies, and authorized them to call another minister. But "circumstances alter cases." Mr. Kuypers was dead; and forgetting "the distinction between the precious and the vile," Mr. Froeleigh now *opposed* the vote of the Synod, and protested.

The Classis held a meeting on August 20th, 1799, when an elder appeared, as representative of the late charge of Kuypers, and claimed a seat. This claim was resisted by Mr. Froeleigh, on the ground that there was but *one* congregation, because all interests were covered by one charter. His zeal for separating the precious from the vile, had now suddenly evaporated, and had given place to an equally warm zeal for combining them. There seemed to be no reason for this unlooked for change, except the unworthy one of gaining the whole of the property which had been hitherto held jointly between them; therefore the elder obtained his seat by a vote of the Body, Mr. Froeleigh and five others voting in the negative. At this meeting a call upon the Rev. J. V. C. Romeyn, from the churches represented by this elder, was presented for approval. Mr. Froeleigh and his friends strenuously opposed it, but in vain. The call was found in order, and approved. Mr. Froeleigh and his friends appealed on this ground, among others, that the corporate seal had been affixed to said call by those consistories without authority by the body corporate. The amount of this reason was, that Mr. Froeleigh

himself had not approved it, and therefore it ought not to be sanctioned by Classis; for the corporate body was composed of four consistories, two against two, Mr. Froeleigh having the casting vote. By this means he thought to control all their civilly official acts, and thus take advantage of the legal aspect of affairs to dictate in the ministerial settlement of Mr. Romeyn. At the same session, his *protest* just spoken of, was altered to an appeal from the aforesaid action of Particular Synod. Thus he had taken, simultaneously, an appeal from the action of Classis to Particular Synod approving a call which the latter authorized; and also an appeal from the action of Particular Synod to General Synod, authorizing the aforesaid churches to make it. In both cases he failed to sustain himself.

The whole of this business having been again thrust upon General Synod, in June, 1800, that body disposed of it by the following resolutions:

“*Resolved*, That as the people formerly under the care of the Rev. Warmoldus Kuypers, have, in consequence of the decision of the Particular Synod, made a call upon the Rev. James V. C. Romeyn, and as the Classis of Hackensack have approved the same, and the said Mr. Romeyn has been installed as pastor of said people, this Synod do hereby ratify these proceedings, so far as that Mr. Romeyn be considered as the pastor of said people, and a member of the Classis of Hackensack.

“*Resolved*, That in consideration of the differences which have long subsisted between the people now under the care of Rev. James V. C. Romeyn, and those under the care of Rev. Solomon Froeleigh, the frequent and unsuccessful attempts to compose these differences,

and the prospect that their continuance as united congregations would not be for their own comfort and the interests of religion; it be recommended to them to separate and accommodate their civil concerns on the principles of equity, and with the temper of Christians. And though this Synod have no authority to dissolve their connection, which subsists by incorporation, and do not in the least interfere in this business, further than recommendation, yet they do hereby resolve, that, in an ecclesiastical sense, the said congregations be entirely distinct, having no dependence or relation to one another, further than what is proper between congregations belonging to the same church, and under the care of the same judicatory."

Had this action authorizing separation, been had previous to the death of Kuypers, it would appear that Mr. Froeleigh would have been satisfied; but against the decision he and his elder now entered a protest in behalf of the congregations they represented.

At this Synod it was adjudged expedient to divide the old Classis of Hackensack; accordingly the order was given, and in due time it was dissolved, and the two new Classes of Bergen and Paramus took its place. The churches under the charge of Mr. Romeyn were assigned to the former, and those of Mr. Froeleigh to the latter. Thus they were as widely separated as they could be, within the pale of the denomination. But, unlike glowing coals, whose heat subsides by separation, this circumstance seems to have had no effect in cooling the ardor. The bushes burned, unconsumed, but not with celestial fire. The Revs. Goetschius, Direk Romeyn and Froeleigh, on the one side, and the Revs. Curtenius, Schuy-

ler, Blauw, Kuypers and J. V. C. Romeyn, on the other, were all ministers of the gospel of *peace*, the former heading a party who took the lead in perpetual *war*. Well-authenticated documents show that the entering-wedge to this unhappy split, was the clandestine effort to secure all the property by a *charter*; the next, was the general dispute about the matter of *Ordination*; and the next and worst, was *Politics*. There was no religious principle at all involved; but only and solely three extraneous matters, which by no possibility of contrivance can be tortured into respectable, much less justifiable, causes for a religious conflict of nearly half a century. This alienation became so thorough, and perversely violent, that had it occurred amid secular, instead of religious partisans and associations, it would have assumed a ludicrous, as well as an absurd aspect; but as it is on the records of the past, it forms a sad commentary upon human inconsistency and folly. Unimpassioned posterity must judge by these records, and acquit or condemn by these alone.

According to the recommendation of General Synod, the churches of Mr. Romeyn at Schraalenbergh and Hackensack, made repeated attempts to obtain an equitable settlement of the secular affairs between them and those of Dr. Froeligh; but in vain. They were rudely repulsed by him, and informed that his people claimed all the property! Such a claim would not of course be allowed. The following is a copy of one of Mr. Romeyn's letters to the Consistory of Mr. Froeleigh; the others have not been recovered.

“BRETHREN: Shortly after the decision of General Synod, we signified to you our wishes and willingness to

separate the civil concerns of the congregations of Hackensack and Schraalenbergh in a peaceable and just manner. As no decisive answer has as yet been received, we beg leave to repeat the purport of the former request. We would be happy to receive an answer from you by the first of January next. We assure you, brethren, that we are actuated by motives dictated by a sincere wish and desire for the peace and welfare of the whole Zion of God in this place; that we have a disposition to accommodate in the settlement of this business as far as we possibly can. Flattering ourselves that, in the present state of the congregations, you are with us convinced that it will be most agreeable to each of us to have a division affected to our mutual satisfaction; and being fully authorized, (both consistories consenting,) we indulge a hope that an amicable settlement will take place and be attended with desirable consequences to all.

“Wishing you every blessing, we are, brethren, your obedient humble servant. In the name of the consistories,

JAMES V. C. ROMEYN.

“*Hackensack, December 15th, 1800.*

“Rev. Consistories of Hackensack and Schraalenbergh.”

To this fraternal appeal directed to the consistory of his churches, Mr. Froeleigh sent the following not very amiable answer:

“*Schraalenburgh, December 26th, 1800.*

“REVEREND SIR: Your letter of the 15th instant I laid before the consistory, and by their order I inform you that if a separation of civil concerns is intended to imply a claim on any part of the property held by the

corporation, they deem such claim altogether unfounded, because by separating without consent, and even in defiance of the most spirited opposition on our part, and by forming themselves into a distinct congregation, your adherents have undoubtedly dissolved their connection with the body corporate and forfeited all title to its property. Nevertheless, in order to prevent the trouble and expense that would attend defensive operations, should compulsory measures be attempted, they are willing to convey under the seal of the corporation to any person or persons, to be nominated by your adherents, the following property, namely, the house-lot in the town of Hackensack; the lot at Pollify; also the trifling sum Dr. Kuypers' congregation annexed to the common stock in 1789, when the consistory was incorporated, and the half of whatever personal property may appear to have been acquired from that time until the time when your adherents commenced the separation. The corporation of Schraalenbergh propose to reimburse to any person or persons, nominated by your adherents, all the moneys and obligations brought into the common stock by Dr. Kuypers' congregation in 1789, together with the half of what may have been acquired since that period until the separation took place.

“A declaration that ‘the peace and prosperity of Zion is intended,’ contrasted with an obstinate and uniform pursual of separating and proselyting schemes, produces such a disgustful want of coincidence, that my consistory request an omission of it should you write again. By order, I am yours, etc., etc.,

“SOLOMON FROELEIGH.

“Rev. J. V. C. ROMEYN.”

In view of the previously well-authenticated facts, the assumptions of Mr. Froeleigh were intensely absurd.

Their old house of worship, erected in 1725, had now become unfit for use; and the people of Mr. Froeleigh, without consultation with the other party, proceeded to erect a new church a few rods west of the old building. Mr. Romeyn's people, in a spirit of conciliation, offered them a proposition to pay for half of it, if they would allow them to come into joint occupancy and ownership, just as they were associated in their other property. But they were repulsed. In this state of things, they found it necessary to provide for themselves in some other way. Notwithstanding the dilapidated condition of the old structure, they continued to worship in it, but it was evidently impracticable to do so for any length of time. The resources of self-denial, when once brought out, are often found more reliable than the money-bags of opulence. So it proved in this emergency.

At a meeting of Mr. Romeyn's Consistory of Schraalenbergh, on September 6th, 1800, the following preamble and resolution were passed:

“After having made repeated applications to Rev. Mr. Froeleigh for becoming partakers or sharers in the new church building at Schraalenbergh, and having offered to pay an equal half of the expense incurred in building, provided they might enjoy equal privileges with Mr. Froeleigh's congregation, and having met with a refusal, finding themselves necessitated to commence the building of a new church, the old one being unfit for use.

“*Resolved*, That the congregation signify their wish relative to the site by signing; and that the place for which the majority sign, shall be the place on which

the church shall stand. The consistory to call on all the subscribers to the (pastor's) call, between this and the 13th inst., at which time they will meet, count the votes, and determine."

On the 13th, consistory assembled to count the votes. Ninety-one were given for the location at Schraalenbergh, at Isaac Kipp's, and fifty-nine for the Flatts, on Col. Nicholl's land.

The Wednesday following a congregational meeting was held, and the following paper adopted:

"Whereas, The congregation of Schraalenbergh, in the county of Bergen, under the care of Rev. J. V. C. Romeyn, labors under great inconvenience in holding public worship, owing to the decayed state of the old church; and, whereas, they have made repeated applications and equitable offers to Rev. Solomon Froeleigh and his Consistory, for being admitted as sharers in the new church lately built by the congregation under his care, and having met with a peremptory refusal; and whereas, they find it their duty, and are prompted by a pious inclination to build an house for God, they have determined, by and with the advice of the Consistory, to proceed with the building thereof in the following manner:

"1. Specifies the spot on which to build.

"2. Dimensions to be sixty feet long, and fifty-two feet wide.

"3. Albert Bogert, Johannes Van Wagenen, Abraham Demarest, Nicausey Voorhees, to be trustees, to whom the title to the same shall be conveyed; to be by said trustees, whenever required by the Consistory, conveyed to said Consistory and their successors in office.

"4. Those who voted for the spot chosen shall pay for the glebe.

“ 5. Six managers were chosen as a Building Committee, namely, Jacob Quackenbush, Isaac Kipp, John Demarest, Nicausey Voorhees, Karl Debaun, Peter P. Demarest, and Johannes Blauvelt.

“ 6. Persons choosing to deliver at the spot any necessary materials, such materials to be placed to their credit same as money. Every sufficient load of stone, three shillings and sixpence allowed. For timber, current market-price, at any landing-place from Old Bridge to Hackensack.

“ 7. When the church shall be completed, seats to be sold to the highest bidder at public vendue.”

Upon this plan they went to work; and when the church was finished, the sum realized from the sale of pews proved to be sufficient to cancel the whole expense of the work, and also pay for one half of the new parsonage erected for their minister at Hackensack.

The structure, a substantial stone building with a lofty spire, was very creditable to the taste, zeal, and energy of the people. Upon the tablet they placed inscriptions significant of their desire and faith.

“ J aaght de vrede na met allen.

“ Den Noorden Kerke te Schraalenbergh, Gebowd in het jaar 1801. Aan alle plattse daar Ik mynes nams Gedachtenisse Stichten Sal, Sal Ik tot u Komen ende sal u Segenen.”—Exod. 20 : 24.

The new church having been occupied, and the old one abandoned, Mr. Froeleigh's people were notified in December, 1801, that the books and other articles were taken out, for safe keeping, until a division of the property should be made.

Soon after, Mr. Froeleigh's people commenced taking down the old church, Mr. Romeyn's people asserted their rights, and notified them not to remove or sell the material; but no notice was taken of the attempted prohibition, and the work of tearing down went on. The materials were disposed of by Mr. Froeleigh's people, and the whole of the proceeds appropriated without recognizing the just rights of the joint owners. Mr. Romeyn's people, with great forbearance, allowed this to pass without litigation.

It is a strange fact, that this quarrel which begun with an effort to grasp the whole property, should have continued for fifty years, and then the original sin have wrought itself out into the same actual transgression. The following instance of ill-requited generosity, will show the illegality and wickedness of the claim set up in the foregoing letter of Mr. Froeleigh. A piece of property, consisting of seventeen acres, opposite the old Church, was purchased for a parsonage, Dec. 13th, 1748, soon after Goetschius was called as co-pastor with Curtenius. Notwithstanding the subsequent long-continued irritations of bad feeling, kept up by excessive friction in their ill-adjusted temporalities, Mr. Froeleigh, longer-sighted than the rest, contrived to get the consistory of Mr. Kuypers, previous to his disruption with them, to unite with his own, in a *written* agreement, giving him the use of this property as long as he lived. After his death, it was amicably divided with our people without any trouble whatever; thus proving how ill-founded was that claim by which the whole of the old Church material was retained.

In defiance of Church authority, as seen by his fore-

going letter, Mr. Froeleigh persistently refused to recognize this Church, and took every occasion to make his contempt felt by them and their pastor. At length matters proceeded to such lengths, that his conduct became intolerable. He received members of this church into his own, refusing to recognize them at all as having been members of a lawful church. Arraigned for the most culpable infraction of ecclesiastical law, he was too sagacious not to see the inevitable issue of his conduct; and therefore to escape the penalty that awaited him, he raised false issues with the Reformed Dutch Church, and seceded from her communion. The whole of this business, of course, came up before General Synod, and their Investigating Committee reported, that Mr. Froeleigh had united with several ex-ministers who had previously been *deposed* for various crimes, to promote schism in the Church. Of course he was *suspended*, and all ecclesiastical acts issuing out of such a union, necessarily would be null and void forever.

The details of this consummation of evils are fully given in Dr. Taylor's valuable "Annals of the Classis and Township of Bergen;" to which reference is made, if any be desirous of more intimate acquaintance with the merits and demerits of the case.

For ten years after this event, Mr. Romeyn continued his labors in this church and that of Hackensack; but his bodily infirmities rendered him after that time inadequate to the performance of his accustomed duties. He therefore proposed the settlement of a colleague. This Church loved their old pastor, and assured him that he might remain their pastor as long as he pleased; but they

would never again consent to the combination of two ministers in the pastorate.

In April, 1833, all the proceedings had by the two congregations of Schraalenbergh and Hackensack in relation to the dissolution of the connection between themselves, and also of that between them and the Rev. Mr. Romeyn, were brought before Classis, and that Body severed the bond that had held them together for a long period in the most amicable relations.

This Church, then, for the first time freed from all co-partnership in its civil and ecclesiastical affairs, prosecuted a call upon the Rev. John Garretson, in the fall of the same year. He continued until Sept. 1836, when he left for another field of labor. During his time, a large and commodious parsonage was built on a plot of ten acres, the whole costing four thousand dollars, which was promptly paid.

In May, 1837, the Rev. Michael Osborne of Virginia was called, and continued until October, 1841.

One year after, the candidate, Cornelius J. Blauvelt, was ordained and installed as pastor, and continued until April, 1858. These brethren were faithful in their ministrations, and under them the Church has steadily grown in numbers and efficiency.

The present incumbent was called in July, 1858.

A petition dated June, 1859, and signed by thirty applicants for pews, was received by Consistory, urging the necessity of enlarging the Church. A congregational meeting was speedily called, and the result was a resolution to enlarge. The Consistory were appointed to conduct the business. They delegated their powers to three of their number as a sub-committee, namely, Isaac

D. Demarest, John C. Quackenbush, and Garet J. Demott, whose unwearied diligence for five months, have secured a most desirable and creditable improvement—eighteen feet in length having been added to the Church, and the whole interior modernized. The Congregation reëntered on the last Sabbath of September, 1860, when the pastor preached in the morning from Exodus 20 : 24—the text quoted on the tablet of the Church. Before enlargement, our building contained but ninety-two pews, exclusive of twenty in the gallery. It now has an addition of thirty-four new pews on the ground floor, and eight in the gallery, making one hundred and twenty-eight below, and twenty-eight above ; or one hundred and fifty-six in all.

The sale of pews, on the ground floor, took place on Nov. 19th, when a sum was thence realized more than enough to defray the entire cost incurred, which amounted to five thousand and three hundred dollars, more or less. Another sale was had on the 29th of the same month, when the balance were disposed of on the ground floor, and a handsome surplus realized. Consistory, much to their surprise, found they had not pews sufficient to meet the wants of applicants. Thus the Lord has blessed us.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

FOR the convenience and information of members of the Reformed Dutch Church and Congregation of Schraalenbergh, the following extracts are taken from the *Constitution* and *Digest* :

OFFICES OF ELDERS AND DEACONS.

1. The *office of Elders* is to exercise Christian discipline, and to be careful that all things be done decently and in good order; to take heed that the Ministers, together with their fellow-Elders and Deacons, faithfully discharge their respective duties; and also, especially before or after the Lord's Supper, as time and circumstances permit, and as shall be most for the edification of the congregation, to assist in performing visitations, in order particularly to instruct and comfort the members in full communion, as well as to exhort others to the regular profession of the Christian religion.

2. The *office peculiar to the Deacons* is, diligently to collect the alms and other moneys appropriated for the use of the poor, and with the advice of the Consistory, cheerfully and faithfully to distribute the same to strangers, as well as to those of their own household, accord-

ing to the measure of their respective necessities; to visit and comfort the distressed, and to be careful that the alms be not misused; of the distribution of which, they shall render an account in Consistory, at such time as the Consistory shall determine, and in presence of so many of the congregation as may choose to attend. Should more be collected than the necessities of the poor may require, such surplus may, with the consent of the Consistory, be devoted to other purposes, connected with the wants of the Church.

3. In all cases the Elders and Deacons shall be chosen from the male members of the Church, in full communion; and notice of the time and place of such election shall be published at least two Sabbaths in the church previous to the election.

4. The manner of choosing Elders and Deacons (in this church) shall be as follows: A double number shall be nominated by the Consistory, out of which the members of the church in full communion shall choose those who shall serve.

5. The Elders and Deacons shall be chosen to serve two years, except when chosen to fill a vacancy or vacancies occasioned by death, removal out of the congregation, resignation, or dismissal from office by the sentence of the Consistory; in either of which cases, the person or persons chosen to fill such vacancy or vacancies, shall serve for the residue of the term only.

6. One half of the whole number of Elders and Deacons shall be elected annually. Liberty is given, of immediately choosing the same persons again, if from any circumstances it may be judged expedient to continue them in Consistory by a reelection. (See Chap. I. Art. III.)

7. It shall be competent for the Consistory, when an election shall have been omitted at the usual time, to appoint another time for that purpose, on an early day, giving the like notice as herein above prescribed, and in like manner for filling vacancies which may occur. (See Chap. II. Art. II.)

OF THE CONSISTORY.

1. The Elders and Deacons, together with the Minister, if any, shall form a Consistory, and the Minister shall preside at all meetings; but in the absence of a minister, the Consistory may appoint one of the Elders to be their president *pro tem*.

2. When joined together in one board, the Elders and Deacons have all an equal voice in whatever relates to the temporalities of the Church, to the calling of a minister, in all which they are considered as the general and joint representatives of the people; but in admitting members to full communion, in exercising discipline upon those who have erred from the faith, or offended in morals; and in choosing delegates to attend the Classis, the Elders with the Minister have alone a voice.

3. The particular spiritual government of the congregation is committed to the Minister and Elders. It is, therefore, their duty at all times to be vigilant, to preserve discipline, and to promote the peace and spiritual interest of the congregation. Particularly before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, a faithful and solemn inquiry is to be made by the President, whether to the knowledge of those present, any member in full communion has departed from the faith, or in walk or conversation has behaved unworthy the Christian profession, that such as are guilty may be properly rebuked, ad-

monished, or suspended from the privileges of approaching the Lord's Table, and all offenses may be removed out of the Church of Christ.

4. It shall be the duty of the Consistory to make a statistical report to the Classis at their meeting immediately preceding the annual meeting of the Particular and General Synods, according to such formula as General Synod shall prescribe, and accompany the same with such remarks on the spiritual state of the congregation as they may deem proper.

5. The Consistory shall keep regular minutes of their proceedings, and shall lay such minutes, so far as the same relate to ecclesiastical proceedings, at least once a year before the Classis with which they are connected, for their information.

6. The Consistory possess the right of calling Ministers; but in exercising this right they are bound to use their utmost endeavors, either by consulting the Great Consistory, or with the congregation at large, to know what person would be most acceptable to the people.

(For the manner and form of transacting this business, and for the constitution, and duties of the Great Consistory, how, when, and for what purposes to be called, see Chap. II. Art. II.)

7. The Elders must appoint one of their number to represent the Church, in Classis, once in every six months, previous to the regular sessions of that body, whose duty it shall be to attend, with the Minister, not only the regular, but all special sessions during the time of his appointment; and also another to take his place whenever the first one named can not attend. (The first is usually termed *primarius*, and the second *secundus*.)

8. The Consistory alone possesses the right of calling congregational meetings.

OF MEMBERS.

1. None can be received as members in full communion, unless they first shall have made a confession of their faith before the Minister, if any, and the Elders, or have produced a certificate of their being members in full communion of some Reformed Church; all such shall be published to the congregation, and be registered as regular members in the Church.

2. It shall be incumbent upon members of the Church, in removing from the bounds of the Church to those of another, to obtain a certificate of membership and dismissal. (See Chap. II. Art. II.)

3. The transfer of their relation, as aforesaid, members are enjoined to make within one year after their removal. (See *Digest*.)

4. It is an established principle of church government that the relation subsisting between a church and its members can be dissolved only by death, dismissal, or an act of discipline. Withdrawing is therefore out of the question. (See *Digest*.)

5. It is expected of all members, heads of families, that they will punctually observe *family worship*.

6. The attention of all persons in the congregation who have not complied with the duty of making a profession of faith in Christ, but are desirous of doing so, is invited to the following paragraph, subjoined to the "Compendium of the Christian Religion," found in our Hymn-Books:

"When those who are inclined to become members in

full communion of the Church, and to approach the Holy Supper of the Lord, thoroughly know and confess these fundamental truths, they are then to be asked whether they have any doubt in any point concerning the doctrine, to the end that they may satisfied; and in case any of them should answer in the affirmative, endeavors must be used to convince them from the Scriptures; and, if satisfied, they must be asked, whether they have experienced the power of the truth in their hearts, and are willing and desirous to be saved by Jesus Christ from their sins; and whether they propose, by the grace of God, to persevere in this doctrine, to forsake the world, and to lead a new and Christian life. Lastly, they are to be asked, whether they will submit themselves to Christian discipline. Which being done, they are to be exhorted to peace, love, and concord with all men, and to reconciliation, if there is any variance subsisting between them and their neighbors.”

OF ORDINANCES.

1. The Sacrament of Baptism shall always be administered in the church or some other place of public worship, at the time of public worship, and the form adopted for baptism hitherto in use shall in every case be retained. In cases, however, of the sickness of the parents, and especially of the infant, it is lawful to administer this sacrament in private. But no private baptism shall be administered without the presence of at least one Elder, who shall accompany the Minister for that purpose, and the same form and solemnity shall be always used as in public baptism. (See Chap. III. Art. I.)

2. The right or privilege of infant baptism doth not

rest upon what is called full communion, nor is the partaking of the Lord's Supper by one or both of the parents an indispensable test for admitting infants to be baptized in the Reformed Dutch Church.

In avoiding one extreme which straitens admission into the Church of Christ by making a test not commanded in the Word of God, it is necessary to watch against the opposite evil, which makes no distinction between the pure and the vile, and which, by an indiscriminate administration to all who apply, relaxes Christian discipline and prostitutes the sacred ordinance of baptism. The General Synod, therefore, recommend and enjoin that when both the parents openly profess such errors or heresies, or are chargeable with such immoralities and improper conduct as ought, if they were in full communion, to exclude them from the table of the Lord, they shall not, during such apostasy in doctrine or manners, be permitted to present their infants to baptism; but shall be denied that privilege until they profess repentance and show amendment. When one of the parents shall be thus guilty, and the other is a decent and peaceable professor of the religion of Jesus Christ, the infant shall be baptized at the request and upon the right of the professing parent, who alone shall stand and present the child. And lastly, when the Minister and one or more of the Elders find great ignorance in the parents, and such a want of knowledge in the first principles of our holy religion as to render them unfit to make a public profession of their faith, it shall be their duty to withhold them for a time, notwithstanding their decent moral conduct and profession, and frequently and affectionately instruct them previous to their admission to the

ordinance, that thus, if possible, the confession and vows at the baptism of their infants may be made with knowledge, sincerity, and truth. (See *Digest*.)

3. Applicants for the baptism of infants should give to the Minister, at the time of baptism, in writing, the names of parents, (maiden name of the mother,) and the name, and date of birth, that a proper record of the same may be made.

4. The baptism of adults is usually performed in the church, on Communion Sabbaths.

5. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered four times a year. Its *frequency* of observance, however, is a matter left to the discretion of Consistory.

OF MORALS.

It is enjoined on pastors and consistories, with all kindness and fidelity, and by all suitable means, to discountenance the practice of *dancing* and all similar amusements at variance with the dignity and sobriety of Christian deportment. (*Digest*.)

The following items are embraced in a Resolution of General Synod:

1. That the principle adopted by many individuals and societies in different parts of the country for the suppression of *intemperance*, namely, total abstinence from the use of ardent spirits, excepting only its use as a medicine, meets with the decided approbation of Synod.

2. That it is therefore earnestly recommended to the members of our churches that they entirely refrain from the use of ardent spirits, except as above mentioned.

3. That it be requested of all our ministers and churches to inculcate the said principle, not only by ex-

ample, but by precept, and especially among the rising generation, and to diffuse such information as may be deemed best calculated to effect the object.

4. That it be recommended to our churches, ministers, and individual Christians to promote the cause of temperance by the formation of societies, or by such other measures as may be thought best adapted to that end.

5. That, as without God we can do nothing, the prayers of all Christians be requested for His blessing upon the means used, and for the putting forth of His power for the suppression of *intemperance*. (*Digest.*)

OF COLLECTIONS.

Consistory have the power to regulate stated and occasional collections as may be deemed by them most advisable.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS AND RULES OF ORDER.

1. Whenever Consistory deem it expedient to call a meeting of the congregation, due notice thereof shall be given from the pulpit. At the hour appointed the meeting shall be called to order and opened with prayer by the Minister, if any, or by an Elder.

2. Nominations shall then be received by him for a *Chairman* and *Secretary*, and when these officers are chosen by a *viva voce* vote, the meeting is duly organized.

OF THE CHAIRMAN.

The duties of the Chairman shall be to preside over the meeting, and see that its proceedings be conducted according to order and the dignity becoming an assem-

bly of the Church ; to state the business before the meeting, and the subjects to be discussed ; to confine speakers to the point ; to restrain them within the rules of order ; to state and put the question when a vote is about to be taken ; to decide questions of order, subject, however, to an appeal to the House by any two members ; to give the casting vote in all equal divisions ; to name the members who are to serve on committees ; to make statements, put motions, and announce decisions, in a standing position ; but in reading, or making replies to incidental questions, he may retain his seat.

OF THE SECRETARY.

The duties of the Secretary shall be to take notes of all the proceedings, that is, of *the things done and past* in the meeting ; and nothing beyond these shall go on the minutes ; and to read all documents and details of business as directed by the Chairman, in a standing position.

OF THE MEMBERS.

1. It shall be the duties of members to preserve order ; not to engage in conversation during the transaction of business ; not to interrupt a member while speaking, except to call him to order, when he violates it, or to correct mistakes and misstatements ; and to submit to the decisions of the Chair. But if he think himself in any wise aggrieved thereby, he may respectfully require the decision of the House, by appealing from the decision of the Chair.

2. Every speaker shall rise, and address himself to the Chairman only, closely confining himself to the subject

in hand, and avoiding all personalities and offensive remarks.

3. Without special permission, no member shall speak more than twice on the same question.

4. When two or more members shall rise to speak at the same time, the Chairman shall decide who of them shall be heard first.

5. Any member who dissents from an act of the meeting, shall have a right to require the names of all voting for and against it to be recorded in the minutes; and during the calling of the *ayes* and *noes*, silence and perfect order shall be observed by every member.

6. If any member be called to order by the Chairman, he must obey, and, if required, he must sit down. And if he act disorderly and contrary to the rules of the House, the Chairman must reprove or otherwise censure him.

7. Every member is bound to vote on all questions submitted by the Chairman, unless excused by a vote.

OF THE QUESTION.

When any proposition is offered to a deliberative assembly, it is called a *motion*; when it is seconded and propounded in that form, it is called a *question*; when adopted, it becomes the *order*, *resolution*, or *vote* of the House.

OF MOTIONS.

1. A motion made must be seconded, and afterwards repeated from the Chair, before it is debatable. It is then the property of the House, and can not be withdrawn by the mover, or directly disposed of in any man-

ner, but by a vote; and every motion, except a motion to adjourn, shall be reduced to writing, if any member require it.

2. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, unless to amend, to lay on the table, to postpone, to commit, or to adjourn. But a call for the "previous question" cuts off all other motions and debate; and when made, shall be put in this form: "Shall the main question be now put?"

3. If a question contain several parts, any of which may be thought unacceptable to the meeting, any member may have it divided, and a question taken on each part.

4. An amendment may be made to any motion, and also an amendment to the amendment; but no further complication of the original motion is allowable. The question on such sub-amendments is incidental, and must be decided before putting the question on the amendment.

5. A question shall not be called up for *reconsideration*, during the same meeting at which it has been decided, unless by a two-third vote of the House; nor can a motion for its reconsideration be made or seconded by any who has voted in the negative. If this motion prevail, the matter stands before the meeting in precisely the same condition, and the same questions are to be put in relation to it, as if the vote reconsidered had never been passed.

6. A motion to adjourn is always in order; that, and the motion to lay on the table, and the Previous Question, can not be amended, and must be decided without debate.

7. All questions must be put on the *affirmative* and *negative* side.

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.

The "previous question" is a technical phrase to designate an original main question, the discussion of which may be causative of other motions, either complicating the subject in hand, or are useless or inexpedient. The object of "moving the previous question" is to get rid of these, so as to free the assembly from embarrassment and confusion by coming to a direct vote without further debate or delay. If decided in the affirmative, the original main question shall then be put in the form in which it was presented. If decided in the negative, the effect is to let the debate go on.

COMMITTEES.

1. The members of committees may be appointed by the chair. The first one named is the chairman of a committee, whose duty it is to draw up a report upon the subject committed. If the appointment grow out of a motion to commit, it is usual to place both mover and seconder upon the committee, the former being its chairman.

2. The report of a committee may be made in two different forms: *first*, it may contain merely a statement of facts, with reasoning or opinion in relation to the subject of it, without any specific conclusion; or, *second*, a statement as aforesaid, with a resolution or resolutions recommended for adoption by the meeting.

3. When a report is presented, the disposition to be

made of it is as follows : If satisfactory, it must be accepted by a formal vote ; if not satisfactory, it may be recommitted with instructions.

4. When a report is accepted, the Committee is discharged ; and their report, being the property of the house, may be amended in any part of it previous to its final adoption, which must be done by a formal vote. When a report is considered by paragraph, it is usual to adopt the resolutions, if any, first ; and then the preamble ; and afterwards the whole report.

MINUTES.

Before the final adjournment, the minutes shall be read, corrected, and approved.

READING OF RULES.

The foregoing rules of order shall be read at the opening of every congregational meeting, except adjourned meetings.

PEWS.

The following is an abstract relating to pews :

1. Every person purchasing a pew shall pay the amount of purchase money into the treasury of this Church, according to the conditions agreed upon, when a record thereof shall be made in a book provided for that purpose, (called the pew-book of the church,) and be entitled to its immediate use and benefit.

2. Pew-holders whose connection with this congregation shall cease, or who shall voluntarily abandon their pews, may sell, but shall not be allowed to hire them out for their own benefit ; and the Consistory shall make

such use of them as they deem proper, until re-occupancy by the owners, or a record of transfer or sale be made on the pew-book of the church.

3. Every person who may purchase a pew from an individual owner, or who may legally inherit the same, shall produce the necessary evidence, and cause a record thereof to be made in the pew-book of the church, in order to entitle him to its possession ; and in case of neglect or omission of said duty, the Consistory shall notify such person thereof.

4. All pews permanently occupied shall be subject to an annual amount of ground-rent, assessed by the Consistory to meet the incidental expenses of the church. *✓*

5. Assessments on the pews may at any time be made for all necessary repairs.

6. Any person refusing to comply with any just assessment made, shall forfeit the use of his pew.

7. It shall be the duty of Consistory to read these By-Laws, or cause them to be read, to all persons making application to them for the purchase of pews.

8. Additions, alterations, or amendments to these By-Laws may be made as follows: 1st. Proposal of alteration in form and manner to be made in writing to Consistory. 2d. Notice given by reading the same from the pulpit on two successive Sabbaths, and appointing the time and place for meeting of pew-holders. 3d. It must then be approved of by a vote of two thirds of the pew-holders present before it can be adopted.

Persons wishing to hire pews or parts of pews, will make application to Consistory, who will do all they can, to accommodate them in the best possible manner.

THE CEMETERY.

The old burying-ground having been all taken up, the congregation found it necessary for their own accommodation to make a new purchase in 1847. This new ground having been properly prepared and laid out in lots, the following rules and regulations were adopted:

1. All full lots, 8 by 16 feet, shall have an assessed value, according to location.

2. All persons belonging to this congregation, and those not now belonging to it who have aided in the aforesaid purchase, shall have the privilege of selecting and holding for their exclusive use any lot or lots in said ground upon the payment of the prices affixed.

3. No person shall be allowed to purchase more than two lots for his own use. No person shall be allowed to purchase lots for, nor sell lots to, *strangers*; since the Cemetery is for the exclusive use of those who have been, or now are, members of the congregation.

4. Any person belonging to this congregation who needs a lot, but is unable to purchase, by his own application to Consistory shall be granted one free of charge.

5. The row of halflots on the north side of the Cemetery shall be reserved for the burial of poor persons who have resided within, and of friendless strangers who may die within, the bounds of the congregation.

6. The moneys arising from the sale of lots shall be used exclusively for the purpose of keeping the fences and ground of the Cemetery in good condition.

The prices affixed to the several lots shall be as follows:

1. Lots in the first tier next the road, and running from east to west, \$2.50 each.

2. Lots between First and Third avenues, running from east to west, \$3 each.
 3. Lots between Third and Fourth avenues, running from east to west, \$2.50 each.
 4. Lots lying at extreme east and west, \$2.50 each.
- Applications for lots to be made to the sexton.

REQUESTS.

It is requested—

1. That parents and guardians see to it that their children commit to memory and recite to them the “Compendium of the Christian Religion,” which is bound up with our Psalms and Hymns, or may be had separately.

2. That children be instructed not to eat any thing in church.

3. That they shall punctually attend the Sabbath-schools, read, take care of, and return the books belonging to the library.

4. All members of the congregation are invited to draw books from the church library, and when done with them, return them according to rule.

5. All persons are requested not to deface or defile any part of the church building, this being the “superfluity of naughtiness.”

6. Families should give the Pastor timely notice of sickness and death, and of any affliction in which they may deem his services desirable, as he wishes to avoid all appearance of neglect.

7. Inquirers are solicited to seek conversation with the Pastor at any time whenever they need information and direction in regard to religious duties.

8. If any person or family be found destitute of the Bible, information should be given to the Pastor without delay.

9. All members of the Church and congregation are solicited to use their influence with such as attend no church, that they may attend ours.

10. It is desirable that strangers, providentially with us on the Sabbath, should find our pew-holders accommodating.

“Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK on these things.”—PHIL. 4 : 8.



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P L A N S

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S Y S T E M A T I C B E N E F I C E N C E .



